A Sourcey Through Anniello, Perein, as Under the title of A Ride Through Wester

Asia, by CLYDE BIGHAM, the Mosers. Macmi ian have published the record of a journey per formed in 1895-96 from Constantinople to Kash gar. The author, formerly an officer in the Grenadier Guards, is now, we learn, a correspondent for one of the principal English nows popers in southeastern Europe. The difficulty of the project which he contrived to carry ou will be evident when we recall the fact that toward the end of June, 1895, when he prepare to start upon als tour, the troubles in Armenia had reached an acute stage. Asia Mine was reported to be shut against trav and an irade had been forbidding all Europeans from entering the Asiatic provinces of Turkey north of the Lebanon. It was only owing to extraordinary good luck that the author of this book was abl to traverso Anatolia and cross the Porslan frontier. Of the four ways of entering Asi Minor Mr. Bigham chose the most direct, that, namely, from the Bosporus to Erzerum which is practically the capital of Armenia Hardly any one bad followed this route since Capt. Burnaby, and it was deemed impractica ble, first, because it required a start from Con stantinopic, where the officials would be on the alert, and secondly, because it involved travel ling through a part of the country especially bostile to Europeans and along a line of towns in each of which a powerful pashs would doubtless try to prevent a traveller from going further. Nevertheless, it was this rout which our author resolved upon, and toward the close of July he left Constantinople, accompanied by a Turkish servant and provided with an ordinary travelling passport, such as Otto

man subjects apply for.

Without noting in detail the various obstacles surmounted, we will merely say that our author proceeded by rail to Angora, where be finally obtained permission to go of back two bundred and ninety miles further to Sivas, whence he could push on as h might to Erzerum, Bayazid, and the Turkish frontier. Of Angora we are told that it is mor like a Levantine than a Turkish city, being full of Greek, Italian, and Armenian traders. The bazases are well stocked, but typical Ottomar wares are few. The city of Sivas, where less Armenia begins lies outside the beaten truck and retains more of its ancient beauty than either Angers or Erzerum, which are in easy unication with the coast of the Black Sea and, therefore, have been more affected by the advance of time. The neighboring country is supposed to be rich in Hittite remains, but, as yet very few discoveries have been made. The few Western archeologists who have attempted to supplement their literary researches by exca vations have been discouraged by the Turkish Government. It appears, however, that Handi Bey, the curstor of the Stamboul museum and the discoverer of the great Sidon sarcophagi has opportunities for exploration at Sivas which are denied to Europeans, and the hope is expressed by our author that he will organize some plan for excavation which may afford a satisfactory yield. Sivas is inhabited by Turks Armenians, and Circassians, each nationality inhabiting a different quarter of the town Kurds also, migrating from one encampment to another, pour in from time to time. Other birds of passage are the Levantines and Jews. Seen from the hill on the west, the city is described as a little paradise. Built on a cool, sparkling river, with gardens on its banks, it presents as enchanting contrast to the burnt-up, barren country which surrounds it. Our traveller rode straight to the "Aflon," or opium khan, where he took the best room he could get. The furni ture consisted of a long wooden settle, a greasy rug, and an old brass clock. The khan was ful of Turkish traders, who were sitting in the pub lie room overlooking the street when the traeller came in. They talked little and smoked a great deal, drinking small cups of Turkish co ice at frequent intervals. This coffee, we are told, is very good, but far too sweet. None o the traders Mr. Bigham saw at Sivas ever seemed to be transacting business in any other fastion. The only pretty things to be bought in "kamchis," or silver riding whips, which the Circassians make beauti fully; they are only made to order, however, and are, therefore, seldom procurable by travel lers. It is, our author reports, impossible to exaggerate the ignorance and backwardness o the people in this part of the Ottoman Empire. They have managed to stand still for centuries. There are no roads, no schools, no hospitals, no attempts to do anything for the poor. A lofty contempt for Europeans and their civilization prevails even among most of the educated Furks, and barely one man in a thousand has a dim idea that, perhaps, an enlightened and rep material happiness. At Kochissar, a town not far to the east of Sivas, the Kaimakam, or Governor, asked the traveller to lunch, and proved to be exceptionally inquisitive about railways. Was it true, he asked, that on could travel a six hours' journey in a single hour! When he was told that a two-days' jour ney could be accomplished in one hour, he piously ejaculated, "God is great!" but apparent ly did not believe it, for he presently desired to know how the train walked so fast. Mr. Big ham started upon a laborious explanation of th machinery, but both his Turkish and his did tionary failed him when he got to the piston arrangements, and the Kaimakam smiled at what be thought was his bad lying.

Erzerum, Mr. Bigham found the gardens and pavilions surrounding the town exceedingly at tractive. These are built for the harems of the rich merchants. The gardens are laid out in the straight walks, edged by rows of dwarfed trees, conventional Persian style; that is, in long thickly planted, and shallow streams intersect ing the avenues. There is generally a fountain or tank in the centre of the garden, but no flower beds. The lodge or pavilion can accommodate eight or ten guests besides the perma nent harem, and the owners ride out from the city in the long summer afternoons entertain each other in their gar dens. In Ersinjan itself, the long, covered bassars are well stocked with fruit, cot tons, cloth, and silver. But the place is mainly given over to soldiers; it is the he quarters of an army corps which, it seems, i xceptionally well equipped and discipline The "hammams," or public baths, reputed very fine, proved disappointing. They are low an dark and quite bare of ornament. In Persis the baths are far more pleasing, being lavishly decorated with pictures. The Sunnis, or Turks Islam, are taught by the Koran that the delines tion of the human form is unlawful, a to ing which obviously narrows the scope of their corative art. Our traveller was much struck in Ersinjan by the apathy of the populace. In the bazaars the salesmen sat staring in front of them, repelling rather than attracting customer and if the visitors were pounced upon as they walked through, it was always by an Armenian The mental dulness of the Turk is often called stoicism and impassiveness by his apologists but it seemed to Mr. Bigham to deserve a worse name. The climate and the Koran together have fostered the Turk's inertia to such an ex tent that, with the exception of the soldiers, not a man in Ersinjan looked alive. On the other hand, the Field Marshal, Mahomet Zekki Pashs Commander of the Fourth Army Corps, who was then living at some distance from Ersinia. proved comparatively wide awake. A Circus sian by birth, and trained in the most rigorous Mussulman school, he is described as one of the most remarkable men in Turkey. His rapid rise to power, however-he is now about 40-was due almost entirely to the influence of his sister, who is one of the Sultan's favorites in the harem at Yildir Kiosk. It is certain that he has greatly im proved the soldiery under his command, and, by suppressing brigandage and encouraging trade, he has given the territory under his con trol unprecedented tranquillity. According to our author he is by no means a narrow man throughout Turkey he is regarded as a possible regenerator of the Ottoman Empire. He de-

plored the Turkish law which prohibits any re-

At Ersinjan, about midway between Sivas and

union of the officers; to this he attributed the lack of esprit de corps among them. He showed an oven mind on another question, being in favor of permitting the Rayahs, or Christian subjects of the Sultan, to serve in the army with the Mussulmens. The reason he gave was that the Armenians would then be dispersed mor evenly and widely, would be better disciplined and would give less trouble.

Of Erzerum, we learn that what prosperity th city still possesses is chiefly due to Armenian enterprise, though the Armenians have suffered more cruelties in this place than anywhere els Lying at the junction of the Trobizond, Sivas Kars and Tabreez roads, Erzerum has, at al times, been a great mart on the caravan route from Constantinople and the Black Sea to Per sia, and from Asia Minor to the Caucasus. The Russians have long recognized its importance and they captured it in the war of 1877. The present fortifications consist of a parapet with high slopes, usaless against modern slege guns, and a pestilential ditch which has been responsible for the death of two thousand soldiers in a single season. The city, however, standing as it does at an altitude of 6,000 feet, is naturally healthful. When our traveller was there the commission ap pointed to investigate the massacres of 1894 in the Sassun and Mush districts was just leaving

the city, their inquiry having been completed We are told that the judges looked carewood and miserable. The class of Turk to which they belonged does not appreciate revolting detail. and it was reported that, on their first visit to the Sassun ditch, they had been overwhelme with disgust. The delegates from the English French and Russian embassies had gone on by post to Trebizond, worn out with the arduous task of discriminating between conflicting evi dence. From what our author learned upor the spot he is convinced that all that was done to impress Europe with the atroclous nhumanity of the crimes committed in the vil avets of Kurdistan was entirely due to the zea of the European delegates. They worked hare and faithfully to get at the truth, in the face of systematic opposition from the official dispenser of justice. Curiously enough, the Kurds, in spite of the opinion current in Turkey that the English, though great in ships, are nothing by land, had just sent a monster petition to Queen Victoria setting forth the ungenerous treatmen they had received from the Sultan, and offer ing an alliance. They laid emphasis on the fact that they had always lived on friendly terms with the Armenians, many of whom were their slaves until latterly, when they had been forced by peremptory orders from the palace to ill treal and murder them. Now they were informed that the Sultan was exculpating himself to the cabinets of Europe by alloging that the massa cres had been wantoniy committed by the Kurds. So far as our author's personal expe ience went, the Kurds are far more attractiv to the casual observer than the Armenians. In spite of their brigand lives they are more hones and straightforward, and they bear pain with remarkable fortitude. They are far more strict in their observance of the Koran than are the Turks. The opinion is expressed that they suffer as much as the Armenians, if no more, at the hands of the Ottoman Government, but their complaints do not reach so far. Of the Armenians, Mr. Bigham did not get a very favorable impression. He quotes with approva the statement of another European traveller that like most Asiatic Christians, the Arme nians do the faith they profess no credit, and their Christianity seems to be but nominal, They are, we are assured, almost entirely ignor ant of their religion. Their Bible, indeed, and sacred books are written in the ancient tongues,

which none but the priests understand. In s ular matters, however, they are a remarkably clever people, excellent linguists and intelligen traders. But, according to our author, when this is said all is said, and their other characteristics are just those which an Englishman dislikes. Astute and subtle, they possess in Asia a reputation very similar to that enjoyed by the Jews in Europe. Their uncleanl habits, their strong pre-disposition to lying and for them by the Turks. On the other hand, the fact is undenled, and the significance of it is no underrated, that for centuries the Armenian have been the victims of barbarous oppression while in our own time their treatment has aroused the indignation of Europe. Of the European and American missionaries encou tered by Mr. Bigham, he reports that their per sonal character is beyond praise, but it seems to him that their efforts were made in a wrong direction. It is pointed out that, in spite of the zeal, the labor, and the money given by wise and energetic men to the work of converting Moslem in Turkey to Christianity, hardly any real con verts are ever made. In Persia, the outcome of such efforts is the same. Mr. Bigham recalls and been working there ten years and had not a single convert to show for his pains. The Mus sulman knows that, according to the Koran, he will be eternally damned if he changes his faith He knows, too, that such a change means death from the hands of his former coreligionists. So the missionaries work on almost hopeless ground. The author is inclined to hold that some of the money devoted to missions in Tur key and Persia would do more good if it were turned to the more prosaic end of making roads

or building bridges, schools, and hospitals. At Bayazid, which, like Metz had once the eputation of being a virgin fortress, but which fell to Russia in 1878, Mr. Bigham said that, had the Russians been suffered to retain it, it would now be one of the strongest cities in the world. It occupies a position of great natural strength, lying, as it does, high up on the face of a mountain flanked by frowning cliffs. At this frontier city, he passed the last night which he was to spend in Turkey for some time. He learned that the delimitation of territory be tween Turkey and Persia in this quarter was a fruitful subject for disagree which are intensified by the hatred existing between the Sunnis and the Shiaha oughly speaking, the Sunnis comprise all Turks and Arabs, the Afghans and the Moslem of India and Central Asia; they look upon the Sultan as the present Caliph or successor to th Prophet. The Shiahs are, for the most part, Persians; they hold that All, Mohammed's cousin was his true successor, and their spiritual head is an invisible "Twelfth Iman," who disappeare own a well about nine hundred years ago, and has not been heard of since, though he is sup posed to be still alive. Religious authority in Persia resides not in the Shah, but in a Chie Mollah, or priest, who lives at Kerbela, a great goal of pilgrimage to Persians. Indeed, the Shah rarely goes upon the "Haj," or pilgrimage to Mecca, for there he would find h the heart of the Sunnite sect, which he detests

From Bayazid our traveller went to Tabreez and thence, by way of Ardabil, Elburz, the Cas plan littoral, Enzeli, and Resht to Teheran whence he proceeded southward through Is pahan to Persepolis and Shiraz. Thence, by way of Shuster and Dizful, he went down the Karun River to its junction with the Shatel Arab, and thence to Bassorah and Bagdad Deferring for the moment a glance at some of his experiences in Persia, we complete our view of what he has to tell us about Asiatic Turkey by some references to the short chapters which deal with the stretch of ountry called Irak Arabi, which consists of the two Pashalics of Bassorah (our author write: it Busrah) and Bagdad. This is a long, narrow re gion not more than 200 miles wide at any point and nearly 400 miles long. The Arabian or desert frontier runs parallel with the Euphrates but about thirty miles southwest of it. On the east lies Persia; the northern end is bounded by the vilayets of Mosul and Zor. The various names which the two provinces of Bassoral and Bagdad and the adjoining regions have borne are enumerated in this vol Irak Arabi was first called Shinar in the Bible; then it became Chaldea, or Babylonia and, under the Romans, Mesopotamis. Its capitals, in historical times, have been successively Babylon, Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and Bagdad. What is now called Farz was the original Persia, the native country of the Achmemenians. Its capitals were Persepolis and Harsan, the two sainted sons of Ali, the

Shirar. Arabistan is the ancient Elam, subsoquently Susiana, which had Susa for its capital The province of Mosul, which lies north of the province of Irak Arabi, is the ancient Assyria the capital of which was Nineveh, which lay near Mosul. To the east of Mosul lies Kurdistan, the ancient Media, the capital of which was Echatana, now called Hamadan. We shall note presently what our author has to tell us about the ruins of Perscpolis, Susa, and Ecba

tana, all of which he visited. Bassorah itself recalls Venice. It is built of piles, and the little creeks which run into the Shatel Arab, as the estuary formed by the june tion of the Tigris and the Euphrates is called formed a street. Along the banks of thes canals are built the brick warehouses and villa of the British traders and Turkish officials. To the west lie the bazaars and the Arab, Christian Jewish, and Sabian quarters. Of the so-called Sabians, a word must be said presently. spoken tongue of the people is chiefly Arabic but Turkish is the official language. Trade is ost entirely in the hands of the English, who have several large mercantile firms. Tigris is navigated as far as Bagdad by two steamship companies, one British and the other Turkish, and there is also a certain amount o traffic done by sailing vessels. The four kinds of boats used are mebelss or feluceas, baving one large sail; kalatches, or pigskin rafts; bel lums, a sort of small gondols, and gophers which are nothing more than primitive tubs For some miles up the river stretch beautifu gardens dotted with palm trees; when they end one encounters swamps, with plenty of snipe an pig. Beyond them the desert. The town of Bas sorah itself is fairly clean, and the bazaars are airy and well stocked. Neither the palace nor mosques are worth seeing, and the only good building is a new military hospital. There are three Turkish cruisers in the Shatel Arab armed with a few guns, but totally unprovided with ammunition. We are told that their commanders live in terror of the o casional visits of British men-of-war. English nfluence in Arabia is, in fact, all powerful, as troops could at any time be shipped from Borr bay to Bassorah or Bagdad, or even to Jeddah The interesting fact is mentioned that during the Armenian troubles in 1895 the Turkis officials in Arabia were afraid of this being done and the more so because they are aware the English rule would be by no means unpopular with the inhabitants of Jeddah or even of Mec ca. The Sultan's authority as Sultan amount to very little, and as Caliph it is nil in Arabia. It he lost the temporal sovereignty, the Sunni would quickly abjure his spiritual rule. Our au thor, therefore, finds it difficult to see where the Turks could establish their capital if they were turned out of Europe. Mecca would be imposible, for not only would the Sherif of that holy city never brook any rival to his power but the means of communication with the res of the empire would depend entirely on the good will of the masters of the Suez Canal Bagdad is too close to the Persian and Arabia frontier; there the Sultan would lie at the mercy of lukewarm allies and bitter foes. At Damascus he would be in the country of the Nestorians and at Erzerum, in the heart of Armenia. An gora, Casarea, or Sivas in Asia Minor, where he could coun; upon the firm support of the Os manli Turks and their friends, the Moslem Cir cassians, are pronounced the only possible places. This is equivalent to saying that the loss of Stamboul would mean practically the end of the Ottoman Empire.

We have referred to the Sabians, to whom one of the quarters of Bassorah is allotted. Con siderable numbers of them are also found at Mohammerah, where the Karun joins the Shatel Arab, at Dizful and at Amarab, on the Tigris. The religion of this remarkable people obliger them to live near running water; they call themselves not Sabians but "Mandayi," or possessors of the living word. A peculiarity is their ustom of bearing two names; one their or dinary or everyday name and the other their religious name, only used among themselves. They live very much to themselves, never at tempting to proselytize; the men are skilful workers in gold and silver, and make beautiful inlaid boxes, which, however, are very difficult to buy, as the Sabians dislike selling to strangers. Their language is a Se mitic one, akin to Hebrew and Aramaic, and in it is written their holy book, the Sidra Raba. As far as can be ascertained, their religion is mainly a worship of St. John the Baptist, from whom they profess to be descended. Baptism great feature in their ceremonial, and is al ways administered at weddings and funeral and on feast days. This is the reason of their invariably choosing to live on the banks of river. Whether they are connected with the Sabseans is questionable, but it certain that the Pole Star enters into their worship. The reticence they maintain about themselves is extraordinary, and the greater part of their tenets is still obscure. They are, we are told, devout and upright men, lish with much respect, because the English Consuls have protected them from the persecution of the Turks. Mr. Bigham got hold of a all manuscript containing a summary of the Sidra Raba, or Book of Order, which purports to be a complete history of the world, written by God and given by Him to the first man. According to this scripture, the world is to exist for four periods of a hundred thousand years each At the end of the first period it was destroyed by fire, at the end of the second by the sword, and at the end of the third by the flood. We are now, it seems, in the fourth period, of which about sixty thousand years have already passed; at the end of this term the world will be destroyed by wind. Of the immediate future the book says that Islam will continue for seventy years, at the end of which time Christianity will become suprem and will remain so for 400 years, during which time, however, all creeds will be tolerated. Antichrist will then appear in Egypt, and the Messiah will rise up in Russia. The last two pages of the manuscript are said to be missing o that what is to happen after the coming of the Messiah is unknown. The Sabians represen apparently, a very early form of the Christian Church, for they have far more points in com a with it than with Islam, and they hate the Mohammedans.

Of Bagdad, the so-called Garden of David, an under the Abbassid Caliphs the capital of Islam we learn that it still has over two hundred thousand inhabitants, and contains one hur dred mosques and fifty public baths. It lies on both banks of the Tigris, the Sunnis and Chris tian traders dwelling on the eastern side; on the western shore live the Shiahs, the Persian colony that looks after the shrines of Kerbels and Kazimaim; here, too. is Haroun-al-Ras-chid's house and the tomb of his favorite wife, Zobeida. The two banks are usually connecte by a bridge of boats, but, when Mr. Bigham was there, all the inter-riparian traffic was car ried on by means of small launches and gophers, the bridge having been washed away by the floods. Both the garriand the populace had been set to work from dawn to sunset against the flood, it being, we are told, a custom of the city not to levy taxes, but to execute all public works by ced labor. After three days the waters went down a little and the bazaars were opened. Our traveller walked through their fine avenues crowded with people and well stocked with shawls, silks, belts, gold and silver cloths, be sides many Chaldean and Assyrian relics. Many of the latter, it appears, are genuine, but the Jews and Armenians devote themselves to the work of imitation with so much ingenuity that only a connoisseur should risk buying. finest building on the Turkish or Arab side of Bagdad is the Seral, the Governor's palace, which includes all the Government offices, the law courts, the Custom House, and police bureaus. The trade of the place lies chiefly in the hands of three European firms, those of Lynch, Holtz, and Sassoon. Consulates are maintained by England, Germany Russia, France, Austria, Switzerland, the United States, and Persia. As at Bassoral Turkish is the official and Arabic the popular tonsue. The finest mosque in Bagdad is that o Kazimaim, on the Shiah side of the river, where two of the holy Imams are buried. The great place of interest, however, is Kerbela, amail town lying about sixty miles west of Bagdad. Here are buried Huseyn and

Prophet's cousin and successor. Huseyn was killed here by order of the Caliph Omar, and the place is still the real centre of the Shiah religion. "Kerbelai," the title given to a man who has made the pilgrimage to Kerbela, is more esteemed in Persia than "Hajji," the designa tion of a pilgrim to Mecca. The great differen between the two sects of Sunnis and Shiah is, as we have said, that the Shlahs receiv All as the direct successor of Mohammed and as the first Callph, while the nis interpose Abu Bekr, and Omar, and insist that All was only the third on the roll. The Sun nis also believe that the caliphate has de scended through the dynastics of the Ommiad and the Abbaselds to the Ottoman Sultan, who is now the orthodox Amir el Muminim, o Commander of the Faithful. The Shiahs, the other hand, maintain that the right line o descent was from All through his sons, Hassa and Huseyn, to the Twelve Holy Imams, the las of whom disappeared in the twelfth century We repeat that the Shiahs believe that thi Imam is still living and that he will eventuall return as the Mahdi and rightful Messiah o Islam. His coming was prodicted by the Proph in the following passage of the Koran, which was held to justify the claims of the allege Mahdi who took Khartum, whose successor or Khalifa, is now ruling at Omderman. The passage runs thus: "When you see black ban ming out of Khorasan, go forth and join them, for the Imam of God will be with thes sanners, and his name is El Mahdi. He will fil the world with equity and justice." Holding these views, the Persians, of course, do not look upon the Shah as anything more than their ten poral sovereign; among them the real power lies in the hands of the Moliahs, whose chief lives a Kerbela. In Kurdistan, there are even some who say that Ali is God, and among orthodox Persians the greatest religious event of the whole year is the tenth day of Muharrem, the anniversary of the murder of Huseyn by the Caliph Omar. We are told that no one who not witnessed this ceremony can realize to what lengths the usually impassive Oriental can be carried by religious enthusiasm. In Azerbajar Europeans generally keep to their bouses th whole of the tenth Muharrem, as the mob and the soldiery are in a state of uncontrollable frenzy. Reverencing All and his sons as they do, it is not surprising that the Persians profeto make pilgrimages to Kerbela or Meshed where the eighth Imam, Riza, is buried. Mecca being so much further away and given over to the Sunnis, with whom they have little in com mon. Pilgrimages to one of the two shrines nentioned set out every year from all the big towns in Persia, the men often taking their families with them. They move very slowly by day marches to their destin tion, preceded by a man with a red flag They stay at Kerbela or Meshed almost nonth, the richer pilgrims offering gifts at the shrine, and the poorer collecting relics. Then with the right to bear the title of Kerbelai,

Meshedi, and with a certainty of eternal salva

tion. Mr. Bigham met many caravans of pil

grims, and he says that they always seemed

devout and in earnest about their journey

Their worst hardship is the extravagant de

mands made by officials on the road in return

for a passport. It is manifest that these rival

pilgrimages do much to keep up the hatred that

exists between the Turks and the Persians.

We have mentioned that Mr. Bigham, after travelling from Bayazid to Teheran, traversed Persia from north to south, thence passing into Irak Arabi. From the last-named region be proceeded through Kurdistan and Khorasan t Meshed, from which city he entered Russian Turkestan, visited Bokhara, Samarkand, and went through Ferghana, across the Alai range into China, terminating his journey in this direction at Kashgar, whence he travelled north across the Steppe until he reached a station on the trans-Siberian Railway. In the present notice we shall mainly touch, so far as Persia is cor cerned, upon what he saw at Pasargadee and on the sites of Persepolis, Susa, and Ec batana. On his way southward from Ispa han, when he had reached a point some sev enty miles beyond Abadeh, he entered the plain of Pasargade, on which are the ruins of a very ancient city and the tomb of Cyrus the Great Cyrus built the city on the site of his great vio tory over Astyages, the Mede, and it subse quently became one of the royal cities of the Achiemenian dynasty, the kings of which were crowned here. Alexander the Great visited it on his return from India in 334 B. C. and found the tomb rifled of its treasures. The ruins, of course, cannot be compared with those at Per sepolis, but they seem to be interesting enough. There is a half-ruined wall, a square arch about thirty feet high, a big pillar with a recess like a sentry box in it, and a cuneiform inscription cut above. On a mound not far off is a tall, slender nearly thirty-fly of the place are the pillar and tomb of Cyrus, The pillar stands away from the road, and is eleven feet high. It is of hewn stone, and is engraved with a picture of a four-winged and crowned king, supposed to be the only authentic portrait of Cyrus in existence According to Mr. Bigham the carving is very fine, but the features are now all completely worn away. The inscription is cut in triplicate cunciform, in Persian, Susian, and Assyrian, and reads: "I am Cyrus, the King, the Achemenian." The tomb, which is about a quarter of a mile from the pillar, and is sur rounded by a graveyard and a small hamlet, is now used as a mosque. It is a square building of polished marble, raised on five gigantic steps, and is about forty feet high. Our travelle climbed up to see the inside, which consists of a chamber about ten feet by eight feet. The walls are covered with inscriptions in Arabic and hung with dirty bits of rag, left as offerings by the Persians.

Pursuing his journey through a rocky defile called the Sangbur, Mr. Bigham found a pa cut along the face of the rock about sixty feet above the surface of the Polwar River. The passage is about two hundred yards long and three feet broad. The outer edge is a rock balustrade, beyond which there is a steep precipice. It is described as a marvellous piece of work, which shows what a pitch of engineerin skill the Persians had reached under Cyrus and Darius. The next day the traveller found him self at Pusa, and, after resting, rode off to Persepolis, where he found the toil of a visit to Persia amply repaid by the spectacle of even the relics of the palace that Cyrus built and Alexander burned.

We are bidden to imagine an immense plat form about 50 feet high, and with a frontage of a quarter of a mile, built entirely of huge blocks hewn stone. The two flights of stone steps which lead up to this platform from the ground are so broad and shallow that it is easy to ride down them. On the platform are six or seven buildings, all in a fair state of preservation The roofs, indeed, are gone, and some parts of the walls have fallen in, but the pillars and portices remain standing, and some of the carvings are said to be as fresh and clear as if the chisel had been used on them but yesterday. Fourteen colorsal columns, each nearly 80 feet high, represent the Hall of Xerxes. Then there is the Porch of Xerxes, about sixty feet high, flanked by two winged bulls, frowning at the plain below. The palace of Darius is full of spirited sculptures of hunting scenes and charlot races, interspersed with portraits of different kings sur-rounded by attendants. The Hall of the Hunired Columns was desolated by an earthquake and is now only a chaos of fallen shafts, archithat it is still possible to conjure up a picture of what it must have been in its glory. Everywhere is carved the peculiar winged symbo which represents the god Ormuzd, the divine principle of life, and all around are the cuneiform inscriptions by which antiquaries were long puzzied, but which were eventually deciphered by Rawlinson. Persepolis was the state palace of the Achemenian kings; here were kept the royal treasure and here stood the altars. The summer residence of the kings, as we have said, was at Ecbatana, and in the winter they lived at Susa; but on great occasion the court always went to Persepolis. Although much of the finest palace was destroyed by Alex-ander, the altars and treasure remained here

under the Sassanian kings up to the overthrow of the Magian State and the final adoption of Islam, in 651 A. D.

At Dizful, near Shuster, our traveller obtained rom the Governor an escort to accompany him to the ruins of Susa. This was, it seems, needful precaution, as the country is infeste by wandering Arabs, who hate Europeans visiting their ruins, from the belief that they com to carry off the gold which, according to tradition, is buried there. Susa, or Shush, as it is called by the Persians, marks the site of three distinct cities. The first and carliest of thes was the capital of the Elamite kingdom. It was called Shushinak, and one of its kings wa Chedorlaomer, who reigned about 2000 B. C. This city was laid waste by Assurbanipa King of Assyria, in 645 B. C. One hundred an forty years later it was rebuilt by Darins, the on of Hystaspes. This palace was destroyed b fire, and another was erected by Artaxerxes II n 400 B. C.; it was in this one, "at Shushan in the Palace," that Daniel saw the vision of the ram. Here, also, the Jewish maiden, Esther was beloved by Ahssueras, now identified with Artaxerxes, and here was situated the greawinter residence of the Achremenian kings Alexander destroyed Shushan in 333 B. C., find ing in its vaults incalculable treasures. Finall the city was rebuilt in 250 A. D. by Sapor II., and flourished for some as the capital of the Sassanian monarchs With the decay of their dynasty, however the city fell into ruins, and nothing now re nains of it but a long mound surrounded by hillocks, which is supposed to have been th citade Close by flows the river Shauvi, pre sumably the Ulai of Daniel, which ran through the market place. The Kerkhah or Khoaspe on the west and the Khorates on the east bor dered the walls, so the diameter of the city must have been over two miles. To the south lie fla green plains, which may have been the royal deer park where young Cyrus hunted. Mr Bigham climbed up the mound and found fragments of brick and pottery, fully colored; these latter were doubt less of no later date than the Sassania epoch. The relies of the older cities lie deeper down. It seems that the traces of Diculator excavations are plainly visible. His chief finds the friezes of the archers and the lions, are no in the Louvre, and are the finest known exam ples of Babylonian enamelling on brick. Near the mound is the reputed tomb of Daniel, ar old square structure of stone, long ago rifled and allowed to fall into decay. On the river bank is a new and gaudy shrine, put up to the saint by the modern faithful.

It was on his way northeastward from Bagdad to 'Ceheran that Mr. Bigham inspected what is left of Ecbatana. He tells us that not long after he left Kermanshah, he passed Behistun, where Semiramis is supposed to have built a city, and then came to Kanga var, a queer little walled town, buried in a clump of bleached poplars. Next, he had to cross a pass over nine thousand feet high, in deep snow and a furious wind. Once over th pass, a gallop of about twenty miles brought him to Hamadan, the most lofty city in Persia, Hamadan is the ancient Echatana, and is said to have been built by Dejoces in 750 B. C. It was the capital of Media, and the original city ossessed seven distinct enceintes, of which the outer one was colored white, the next one black, the next purple, the next blue, and the last three orange, silver and gold re spectively. Inside the seventh and inmost wall, lay the royal palace, where Astyages, grandfather of Cyrus, had reigned. The population of Echatana is now about 50,000, composed of Per sians, Armenians, Kurds, and Jews. The latter do a flourishing trade in counterfeit relics, and enjoy some prestige through a shrine where Esther and Mordecai are supposed to have been buried. Inside the tomb are two profusely carved wooden sarcophagi, with an inscriptio to the effect that repairs were made in 850 A. D. The saints' bodies are alleged to rest in a vault seneath, but Mr. Bigham says that, when one looks through the narrow hole in the floor above, there is nothing to be seen in the dim light. Nevertheless, the tombs are supposed to be the most authentic in Persia, and are vene

rated by Moslems as well as Jews. Another somewhat memorable place visited by our traveller while on his way to Mesh Danghan, in Khorasan, which disputes with Shahrud the distinction of being the site of the ancient Parthian capital, the real name of which is lost, but which the Greeks called Hecatompy los. It was there that Alexander found the dead body of Darius, and it is also famous as being the place where Nadir Shah finally beat the Afghans in 1729. There is here an Arab brick minaret dating from the tenth century. The position of Shanrud, also visited by our author. is remarkable. To the north lie the great snow covered mountains of the Shahrud range, and to the south the almost boundless wastes one from Meshed, another from Teheran, and another from the Caspian, which, a little south of Astrabad, leads over a narrow and easily de fended mountain pass. An army stationed at Shahrud would command the approaches from the sea, and at the same time effectually prevent any junction between forces operating in Khora-san and the west. We are told that, with a little skilful engineering, the road from Astrabad could easily be made passable for artillery, or at least for light field guns. No doubt the Russian realize the strategic importance of the place; it is certainly dominated by Russian influence. Shahrud was unquestionably one of the great cities of the Parthian empire, if it was not the capital itself. A chapter is devoted to Meshed, the great city

lying near the Persian border of Afghanistan and

Russian Turkestan; it is 550 miles from Tehe

ran. Our traveller rode into it up the Khineba

avenue, the longest straight street in Persia, at the top of which a chain is stretched across a archway to protect the shrine of the eighth Imam Riza from the sacrilegious foot of the Eu ropean. The guardian of this shrine is the greatest personage in the city, and is able to keep up greater state than the Governor of Khorasan himself, since he has at his con mand the immense revenues of the shrine, the "Vakuf," or sudowments of which comprise lands and taxes all over Persia. Although the Imam Riza was killed in the ninth century, by the Caliph Mamun, son of Haroun-al-Raschid, it was not till 1330 that the shrine became celebrated. When the Scfadi dynasty adopted the Shiah faith as the State religion of the empire, Meshed at once rose into cominence, and is now one of the chief object tives of pilgrimage to Persians, ranking, as we have said, immediately after Mecca and Ker bela. All sorts of privileges are enjoyed by the pilgrims during their stay in Moshed. The principal one is that of making temporary mar riages, the contract being operative from one day to ninety-nine years, and terminable at the husband's discretion. A fee is paid to the Moliah who performs ceremony, which is, it seems, merely a thin veil over a prostitution which at once makes th place attractive and puts money into the priests pockets. The mosque which contains the saint's omb is surrounded by a sacred precinct or "bast," a quarter of a mile square, all the en-trances to which are marked by chains strung across the road. Beyond these no European may go, but we are told that it would be easy to dofy the regulation in disguise. The Sabu or inner court, contains the shrine, with its gilded dome and two minarets. The so-called gilding, which was once composed of thick gold plates, is now only of copper. The shrine itself, however, is still beautifully deco rated. Near it stands a mosque, built in 1440 with a magnificent arch and a blue dome. Fit teen miles to the north of Meshed lies Toos, the ancient seat of Persian government, where Fer dusi is buried. He was born in 940 A. D., and lived at the court of Mahmud of Ghuzni, fo whom he wrote in Pehlevi or ancient Persian his great work, the "Shah Nameh," or history of the kings of Persia. The language of the book is said to be so pure that it contains but two Arabic words.

Khiva our traveller did not see, for it lay considerably north of his route, and the ruins of Merv he passed in the night time. But he sojourned for awhile at Bokhara, Samarkand, and | for the Orus rises close by Cabul; secondly, the

Khokand, and penetrated, as we have said, to Kashgar, in Chinese Turkestan. Of the Russian railway running from the Caspian by way o Askabad and Morv to Samarkand and Tashkend, our author reports that there is only a single track, and the rolling stock is not of the newest make. The carriages have corridors and a wagon restaurant attached. Only three express trains run a week, and these are always crowded with passengers. The Government of ficials travel second class, the merchants and the better sort of peasants third class, and the great mass of Turcomans, Khirghis, and poor Russian laborers fourth class, in carriages like long cattle trucks, with flat shelves running along them, on which men, women, and children lie huddled up with their baggage. It seems that the face of the country changed as soon as the train had run through the country of the Tekke Turcomans and had reached the fertile strip of land which borders the Oxus, itself the frontier of the protected State of Bokhara. All the land was thenceforth under cultivation, except for a short stretch of sand hills near Karahul, Evidently many changes taken place in Russian Turkestan since Schuyler described it some twenty years ago There are now, we learn, two Bokharas, the old and the new, and Mr. Bigham predicts that Bokhara the Noble will soon become a ruin like Mery, for all the existing activity centres in the nineteenth century mushroom town which has aprung up with the railway. Once Bokhara was the most important of the Central Asia Khanates, and, although its political power has van ished, it retains commercial importance and it still the real centre of commerce in Turkestan although the Russians are trying to transfer the trade of the capital to their own town, Samar kand. This they purpose to do by carrying off the waters of the Oxus, which formerly made Bokhara so fruitful and beautiful, to Samarkand Bokhara is still celebrated for its fruits, and we are told that its silks are rarely excelled out of China. Wares from Persia, Afghanistan, China and Europe still come here, and the silks and fruits of Bokhara are sold in the markets of Delbi, Cabul and Nijni Novgorod. The inhabitants, Sarts or Bokbarlotes, speak a bastard Per sian, but in religion they are pure Sunnis, and even now, look to the Sultan in Stamboul as their Calinh. The Amir used always to get an investiture from Constantinople as "Reis-i Din," or Guardian of Religion, but the Russian protectorate has stopped that. Our traveller drove into old Bokhara the day after his arrival and met on the way some of the dignitaries rid ing out on horses or donkeys. They were attired in brilliant red or yellow striped silk robes they were large white turbans on their headand sat on gorgeously embroidered saddle cloths. Mr. Bigham says that most Bokhariote dignitaries were very handsome men, and they were all superbly mounted, the donkeys being pure white and as well bred as the horses. The mud-battlemented wall is entered through a gate in good repair inside of which a guard of the Amir's soldier are lounging. The colors in the bazaars ar described as splendid the brass pots and pans glittered in the sun. The blue-tiled domes o the mosques and the green waters of the marble washing tanks caught the light and rivalled the silks in their shifting hues. On all sides our author saw, by the side of clear-cut Per sian features, queer, ugly, Mongolian faces which added to the picturesqueness the scene. All the women were blue veils reaching to the waists, thus leaving their reputation of being the loveliest women in the world entirely safe. Standing on the steps of the ark or palace, which was mosted, Mr Bigham remarked just below him on the right a wooden cage in which a huge striped tiger was pacing up and down. The animal was the property of the Amir, and had been cooped up there for seven years. Of the Amir's palace we are merely told that it is a large stucco building, lay ishly decorated inside with rough painting in blue, green, and red.

A much more minute description is given of the historic and legendary city of Samarkand, which for so many centuries was inaccessible to Europeans. That Samarkand is a very ancient city is beyond dispute. According to Persian legends, Afrosiad, the mythical King of Turan, was its founder. In historical times Alex ander conquered it, and its palace was the scene of Clitus's murder. Subsequently it be came one of the leading cities of Graco-Bactrian dynasty, until a nomad tribe called the Quetchji seized the kingdom. In 500 A. D. a Nestorian Bishop built a cathe dral here, and, two centuries later, the see be came metropolitan. In 810, the Arabs con quered it, and introduced Islam. The two religions fought for the mastery until the middle of the thirteenth century, when Christianity vanished, and since then Samarkand has been a centre of the purest Mohammedanism. For six centuries its doctors of law have been renowned for the severity of their tenets and the arrogance of their orthodoxy. To this day "Tawazon i Samarkandi" (the humility of the Samarkandi) is an ironical proverb. Here rival expounders of the Koran, the Ulemas and the Muftis thronged to split hairs over the meaning of obscure passages. Here Tamerland was crowned and the great Baber; then a suc cossion of Uzbeg and Chagati Khans fought over Samarkand for three centuries, and i finally fell under the Russian yoke in 1864. It is now the head of one of the provinces of Tur kestan. The district has always been renowned for its populous and fertile villages. Since the annexation by Russia the city has been greatly improved and beautifled; it is now described as an excellent example of a Russo-Tartar town. There are long avenues and paths planted with trees. model barracks, a few shops and inns and native azaars, which are clean. The water of the town is brought from the Zarafshan and the Oxus, and the irrigation works are admirable. The inhabitants consist mainly of Sart Moslem speaking Tajik or Tartar Persian. They are

quiet, well-behaved, ugly people, good Sunnis, and once had the reputation of being both merry and literary. Among the historical buildings the most inter esting is the Gur Amir, built by Timur the Lame, or Tamerlane, for his mausoleum. He lies buried in a carved black marble sarcopha gus, side by side with his grandsons, Jehangir and Uleg Beg. The tomb itself is neither mag nificent nor beautiful, though its association make it impressive. On the other hand, the Shah Zendeh is pronounced the most gloriou mosque in Asia. It was built by Tamerlane is honor of Zendeh, who converted Samarkand to Islam. The colored tiles, the mosaic, the gold tracery and the wood carvings are described as wonderful. Further on is the mosque of Bibi Khanum, now a ruin. Bibi was the daughter o the Emperor of China and Tamerlane's favorite wife. The mosque is said to have been built after her own design, and no doubt reproduced the glories of Pekin and Cambulu. The Registan, or Great Square, however, seems to be the most impressive feature of Samarkand. It is a huge quadrangle, three sides formed by domed and minareted corridors, the fourth by a bazaar; the middle of the open space is filled with mer chants, camel drivers, and poddlers. The colleges were once seminaries of learning, but now they are merely caravansaries for the reception of students and pilgrims. Some of th old decoration still survives and is depicted as very beautiful. There are frescoes and inscriptions in blue and gold on the walls, fluted pillars, and flying arches. As you walk along you see "students" squatting silently before the doors of little stone cells. The last thing Mr Bigham saw in Samarkand was the Kok Tasa, or large green stone, on which Tamerlane was crowned. It stands in the old citadel, and near it is the font, on the edge of which malefactors heads were cut off.

of Central Asia, the Oxus, or Amu Darya, and the Syr Darya, formerly known as the Jaxartes. The Russian engineers have on foot a notable scheme to turn the Oxus, which now flows into the southern end of the Aral Sea, back into its original course, when it would flow into the Caspian. The ancient bed is still visible, and a Russian expedition has lately explored it. If the Oxus could be made to resume its former chan-

A word should be said about the great rivers

nel two important results would follow: First, a

water way would be opened from the Caspian

into the northeastern corner of Afghanistan,

great Kara Kum desert would be transfer from a barren plain into a fertile cornfield. The report of the Russian engineers has not been published, and It is, therefore, as yet unknown whether the scheme is practicable; if it could be carried out, the benefit to the rulers and inhabitants of the country would be enormous The immense waterway known as the Syr Darya, or Jaxartes, rises in the Tianshan Mountains, and flows west and north until It discharges its waters into the northern end of the Aral Sea. During the last part of its 1,000-mile course it is navigable, but, as it is ice-bound for four months in the year, Mr. Bigham does not deem it likely to become of great commercial importance. It is well known that in the legendary lore of central Asia the Oxus and Jaxartes are identified with two of the rivers of Eden, the Pamir being supposed to be the site of the Garden.

Khokand, where our traveller stayed a night, means "Boartown," be tells us, and wild pirs are still plentiful in the covers which surround the city. It was formerly the capital or the ancient Khanate of Khokand, and was annexed by Skobeleff in 1876. Cotton, silk, grain and rice are the chief industries; nearly all the paper used in central Asia is made from Khokand rice. The population of the city is said to be about 100,000, at least a whom suffer from goltre. The finest building in the city is the Khan's palace or citadel. It is in good repair, and the façade, approached by a sloping stone ramp, is gorgeously enamelled in blue and green. The illings of the dome and the paintings on the minarets are also very picturesque, and are thrown into relief by the whitewashed barracks. There are two protty mosques and a fine square in which stands the palace, the posthouse, and a small hotel. The town was once called the Delightful," and Mr. Bigham thought that in some ways it still deserves the title. The people dress in bright clothes, the Sarts chiefly in red, and the children stick red or rellow flowers behind their ears, which give an odd look to their little wizened faces. The gardens of the town are full of mulberry trees. cultivated for silk worms, and the whole town, with its Eastern picturesqueness and Russian improvements, afforded a pleasing contrast to most of the halting places in Ferghana. The most easterly town in Russian Turkestan at which the author stopped on his route to Kashgar was Osh, which claims to be the ancient Alexandreshata, the eastern limit of the mightfest march on record, and tradition recounts that here Bacchus, Hercules, Semiramis, and Cyrus all built altars and offered sacrifices, Mr. Bigham says that the traveller can easily understand how a General would be baffled by the barrier of mountains on the east, north and south. Probably the tracks over them now are very much what they were in Alexander's day; difficult enough for a small caravan and impos sible for a large army. Osh and Kashgar are practically at the same altitude, 5,000 feet, but between them lies an

immense mountain wall. The ascent was very

steep, and the track, scarcely eighteen inches

wide, the only safe foothold. At 11,000 feet our

traveller reached the regular snow line, and he

lescribes the view from the summit, where his aneroid registered 14,500 feet, as the most glorious thing he has beheld. Stretching away to the south were the great peaks of the Alai and Pamir ranges, and beyond them could be distinguished Mounts Kizil Agyn and Kaufmann, which rise respectively to 22,000 and 23,000 feet. From the Persian border to the Russian frontier fort of Irkestan, our author computed that he had travelled over 1,000 miles in twenty-four days, including stoppages. On the hill just above Irkestan was stuck up the Chinese frontier post, an old wooden board with celestial characters inscribed on it. Thenceforth the traveller was in the Middle Kingdom. Five days after passing the frontier Mr. Bigham found him self nearing Kashgar amid gardens of cloves and mulberries, which smelt sweetly a long way off. There are, it seems, two Kashgars, the old and the new. In the old town live the Chinese Governor and the civil officials, but the majority of its inhabitants are Turki-Mohammedaus. The new city is about five miles distant, and is entirely Chinese. It contains the barracks and some shops, besides the palace where the military commander of the province lives. The history of Kashgar is less interesting than that of the Khanates further west. The earliest records date back to the time of the Han dynasty, and it is sometimes identified with the Kasia Regia, to which Ptolemy alludes as in "the country of Scythia beyond the Imaus." In the tenth century Islam became the faith of the resident Tartars, and, although it received a severe check from Jenghis Khan's invasion, it has always remained the dominant religion of the country. Our author says the natives are a religious, moral people, and by no means bigoted. They are Su looking upon the Sultan as their lawful Caliph. They know nothing of him, indeed, e lives "at Stambul in Rum," but they vague ly connect him with the glory of the ancient Roman empire, and respect him accordingly. It will be remembered that, in 1862, Kashgar, which had fallen into the bands of the Chinese after the decay of Tamerlane's successors, be came an independent kingdom. The Tungani tribes and Mohammedan Tartars rose under Yakub Reg, turned out their oppressors, and established an autonomous State. Embassics were sent to Calcutta and Constantinople, and in return Yakub Beg received a firman from the Sultan, with the title of Amir el Muminim, or Commander of the Faithful, and a license to offer up public prayer in the mosques. Emissaries from India and from Russia also acknowledged Yakub as King of Kashgaria. Unluckily for his subjects, he was murdered in 1876, after having governed wisely for fourteen years. His sons having quarrelled about the succession, the Chinese regained possession, and have been established in Kashgar for about twenty years. They are detested, is seems, by the natives as pagan oppressors, and there are frequent rebellions which necessitate the presence of a force of 3,000 Chinese soldiers in the province. The influence of Russia is powerful, and the Chinese tremble before it. The natives, knowing how well their brothers in Ferghana and Siberia are governed by the Russians, look upon the latter as their natural protectors, and the Russian Consul-General is called "Le roi do Kashgar" by his friends. We learn, lastly, that Kashgaria, or Sin Chiang. is by no means a fertile country. It is said that the desert encroaches year by year, and the unsettled state of political affairs prevents the people from taking much pains about the cultivation of the land. The province stretches from Russia and Dzungaria on the north to Kashmir on the south; is bounded on the east by the desert of Gobi and the mountains of Thibet. The population is over two millions, but of these only five thousand are Chinese, the rest being Kirghia, Turkis, Tunganis, and Mongols. The city of Kashgar is at least two thousand miles from Pekin, but our author asserts that fast couriers can in eight days ride to the capital. This seems incredible enough, but it is said that a message can be flashed by beacons in twenty-four hours. We now take leave of this interesting volume,

merely noting that when the author entered European Russia on June 20, 1896, he had been in Asia eleven months, during which time he had travelled 8,217 miles, 4,003 of which he had ridden on horseback.

NO LETTER WRITER.

Facts Mr. Gobbleby Can State, but Letter Writing as an Art He Boesn't Understand.

"I'm no letter writer," said Mr. Gobbleby. "I can say: 'Yours of the 30th inst. came duly to hand,' and I can say 'we've been having some pretty fine weather intely, but we are looking now for a change. Johnny cut himself bad yesterday with his new jackknife. Mary's new dress fits her beautifully. Mary has the measies. Johnny is just getting over the whooping cour Willie is down with the croup, and Jane had to stay home from school to-day on account of the carache. Mother has a touch of the asthma

carache. Mother has a touch of the astance again, but otherwise we are all well.' I can toll these plain facts well enough, but when I set to the end of that I have to slop.

But don't you know some folks can corright on, easy as rolling off a log, talk, talk, talk, talk, and have so much to say they have to crise cross the letter when they get to the end! Something I never could do and never could understand."